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Testimony of Senator Sam S.F. Caligiuri
SB 198 AN ACT REQUIRING A TWO-THIRDS VOTE TO ENACT NEW MUNICIPAL MANDATES
Planning and Development Committee
March 10, 2010

Chairman Coleman, Chairman Sharkey, Ranking Member Fasano, Ranking Member Aman, thank you for the opportunity to testify today in favor of SB 198, AN ACT REQUIRING A TWO-THIRDS VOTE TO ENACT NEW MUNICIPAL MANDATES.

As you know, one of the largest drivers of municipal budgets is the yearly enactment of local spending mandated by the General Assembly. Connecticut municipalities must already comply with over 1200 mandates. CCM estimates that half of all municipal spending in Connecticut is to pay for state mandates services.

As the former acting chief executive of the fourth largest city in the state, I know the burden of these mandates, and the effect they have on our local municipalities. Unfunded or underfunded state mandates ties the hands of our municipalities, making it extremely difficult to control local costs, thereby forcing them to increase property taxes.

SB 198 would require a two-thirds vote of the General Assembly creating or enlarging a state mandate to local governments. If enacted, only those mandates that have widespread, bipartisan support could pass. In these difficult times, with state funding to municipalities in question, we must give cities and towns the tools to control their spending through mandate reform.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today in strong support of SB 198.